

## 8 A 21ST CENTURY RETAIL AND LEISURE CENTRE

### INTRODUCTION

- 8.1 Middlesbrough town centre is one of the north east's strongest performing shopping centres, only Newcastle and the Metro Centre contain more retail floorspace. The town centre is the focus for the serviced based economy, is a key driver in the wider town economy and is an important source of employment. The town centre is also the focus for a vibrant evening economy based on the Middlesbrough Leisure Park including the cinema, restaurants, pubs and clubs. In addition, the borough has a strong network of district and local centres meeting the day to day needs of residents.
- 8.2 The draft RSS recognises Middlesbrough's role as the largest retail centre in the Tees Valley and a major cultural and service employment centre serving the city region. As such it is identified as being appropriate to develop new city-scale leisure, cultural, office and retail development in the town centre and at Middlehaven. In terms of leisure uses, a focus for development will be within the Green Blue Heart between Middlesbrough and Stockton town centres.

### RETAIL STRATEGY

- 8.3 National guidance advocates the need to develop a retail hierarchy of centres which each perform their appropriate role to meet the needs of their catchment areas. In Middlesbrough, a retail hierarchy has been established based on centres of strategic importance within the borough. The town centre is the largest centre in Middlesbrough and is a sub-regional centre in the north east region serving the catchment for the Tees Valley city region. It provides a range of convenience and comparison shopping, is the centre of the service based economy and performs an important administrative function. The two district centres of Berwick Hills and Coulby Newham serve convenience shopping needs, have a comparison shopping function and contain a range of leisure and community uses. There is also a network of local centres, which meet day to day shopping needs.

### Middlesbrough Retail Study

- 8.4 The Middlesbrough Retail Study (MRS) was prepared by consultants White Young Green in 2006 to identify future capacity in the borough to accommodate additional shopping facilities. The study highlights that the town centre is poorly represented in terms of convenience shopping while comparison goods shops (clothes, furniture and electrical goods) are well represented. However, there is a deficiency in 'bulky' comparison goods (furniture, electrical goods and carpets).
- 8.5 From a telephone survey of Middlesbrough and the surrounding area, the study found that for convenience goods, the market share has fallen over the past 5 years. This means that now only 42% of residents in the primary catchment area do their convenience shopping within Middlesbrough. This is resulting in more journeys to locations outside of the borough and less money being spent in the town's economy. The study recommends to claw back some of this expenditure and to promote more sustainable travel patterns, Middlesbrough should increase its market share for convenience goods to a minimum of 50%. The study therefore identifies capacity for 1,493 sq.m (net) convenience floorspace by 2010 and 2,761 sq.m (net) convenience floorspace by 2016. The study further recommends that the majority of this floorspace be located in the town centre.
- 8.6 The study recommends that for comparison goods, just to retain Middlesbrough's current market share, there is capacity for 10,798 sq.m (net) floorspace by 2010 and 25,892 sq.m (net) floorspace by 2016. However, the study further recommends that Middlesbrough again should seek to increase its market share particularly for 'bulky' goods. The study states that market share for comparison goods should be increased to 40% resulting in capacity for 30,193 sq.m floorspace by 2010 and 41,725 sq.m floorspace by 2016. There are no figures available for retail capacity beyond 2016 as this will need to be assessed through a revision to the MRS.
- 8.7 In line with the findings of the retail study and PPS6 it is considered that the majority of this floorspace should be located in the town centre. Particularly



as both of the district centres within Middlesbrough - Berwick Hills and Coulby Newham - are anchored by superstores. There is no retail growth proposed at either the district centres or local centres, other than to maintain and enhance their existing role and function.

8.8 Due to the constrained nature of the current town centre boundary it has been impossible to identify any sites suitable for a large convenience store or sites for comparison retailing. Consequently, it is proposed to extend the boundary of the town centre to accommodate this capacity. Exact locations for new retail development will be

identified in the Regeneration DPD in line with national planning policy contained within PPS6, particularly relating to sequential site selection.

8.9 The retail hierarchy contained within the Core Strategy identifies five levels of centre. These are defined in table 8.1. It is not possible to prescribe either a minimum level of floorspace or number of units to each type within the hierarchy. A centre's position within the hierarchy will be determined by a number of factors including floorspace, number, size and type of units, characteristics of the centre, catchment area and proximity to other centres.

Table 8.1 **MIDDLESBROUGH RETAIL HIERARCHY**

CENTRE	PPS 6 DEFINITION	CHARACTERISTICS
Middlesbrough town centre	City/town centre	The largest single centre for retail and other town centre uses within the Tees Valley city region. Acts as the sub-regional centre for the Tees Valley.
District centres	Town centre	Provide a range of retail, commercial, community, service and leisure uses serving more than a local catchment area. Typically anchored by a large food store (3,000 sq.m+ net) and incorporate leisure centre.
Medium local centres	District centre	Many have at least one supermarket or superstore and a range of non-food retail services, such as banks, building societies, and restaurants. They may also include public facilities such as a library. Where there is more than one local centre in an area the medium scale centre is normally the dominant one.
Small local centres	Local centre	Whilst performing a similar function and serving a similar catchment area to the medium scale local centres, they are not as well provided for in terms of the number and size of units and range of services offered.
Neighbourhood centres	–	Usually small parades of shops of a purely neighbourhood significance. They provide an important sustainable local facility.



## POLICY CS13 RETAIL STRATEGY

The Council will work with partner organisations and the local community to identify, protect and enhance the following hierarchy of vital and viable retail centres in Middlesbrough:

### Town centre:

Middlesbrough town centre:

In addition to consolidation of retail floorspace within the existing shopping centres capacity is identified for an additional 2,800 sq.m convenience floorspace (net) and 41,800 sq.m comparison floorspace (net) up until 2016. This requirement will be kept under review and adjusted as required.

### District centres:

Berwick Hills, Coulby Newham:

No proposed development within these centres unless it can be demonstrated that it is to meet local needs, is of a scale appropriate to the centre and is to maintain the vitality and viability of the centre.

### Local centres:

#### Medium-scale local centres

Acklam Road/Cambridge Road  
 Acklam Road/Mandale Road  
 Belle Vue, Marton Road  
 Eastbourne Road  
 Lealholme Crescent  
 Linthorpe Village  
 Longlands/Marton Road  
 Marton Road/Gypsy Lane  
 North Ormesby  
 Parliament Road  
 Viewly Centre, Hemlington

#### Small-scale local centres

Beresford Buildings, Thorntree  
 Broughton Avenue, Easterside  
 Marshall Avenue, Brambles Farm  
 Ormesby High Street  
 Penrith Road  
 Roman Road  
 Saltersgill Avenue  
 Shelton Court, Thorntree  
 The Avenue, Nunthorpe  
 Trimdon Avenue

No proposed development within these centres unless it can be demonstrated that it is to meet local needs, is of a scale appropriate to the centre and is to maintain the vitality and viability of the centre.

### Neighbourhood centres:

Cargo Fleet Lane/Fulbeck Road  
 Hall Drive  
 Hollowfield, Coulby Newham  
 Vaughan Centre  
 Westerdale Road  
 Whitfield Buildings

No proposed development within these centres unless it can be demonstrated that it is to meet local needs, is of a scale appropriate to the centre and is to maintain the vitality and viability of the centre.

## POLICY CS13 RETAIL STRATEGY (continued)

This will be achieved through:

- a developing and expanding the town centre to incorporate Cannon Park, part of Middlehaven, and the University to provide opportunities for development and its continued growth as the principal centre of the Tees Valley city region;
- b encouraging retail, commercial, leisure and cultural development within a centre of an appropriate type and scale commensurate with its current and future function;
- c safeguarding the retail character and function of centres by resisting developments that detract from their vitality and viability. The sequential approach will be applied when considering proposals for new town centre uses;
- d encouraging convenient and accessible, district, local and neighbourhood shopping facilities to meet day to day needs of residents, and contribute to social inclusion;
- e ensuring shopping facilities are accessible by a choice of means of transport including by car, walking, cycling and public transport;
- f ensuring new developments are of an appropriate high quality design particularly in the town centre;
- g where appropriate seeking to consolidate retail and other uses into a more sustainable, compact and viable centre core; and
- h alternative uses for local centres will only be considered where the centre is included as part of a comprehensive area based regeneration initiative.

### LEISURE USES

- 8.10 The town centre is the focus for the majority of leisure activity in Middlesbrough. It plays host to the successful evening economy previously referred to, Middlesbrough Leisure Park and the soon to be developed Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima). There are also a number of leisure facilities located outside of the town centre, including Middlesbrough Football Club, Middlesbrough Theatre, the leisure element of Teesside Park and numerous leisure centres and gyms. Additionally there are open spaces and parks, which provide residents with further opportunities for leisure activity.
- 8.11 The Stockton-Middlesbrough Initiative identifies an area between the two town centres of Middlesbrough and Stockton as the Green Blue Heart. The strategy for the Green Blue Heart identifies this area as a location for city-scale leisure development. The Alsop strategic framework plan produced for Greater Middlehaven also identifies the area as a location for major leisure development as part of a wider mixed use scheme.
- 8.12 Prissick Base is also a major destination within Middlesbrough for sport and recreation uses. The opening of a new state of the art skate plaza has recently reinforced this role. It is the country's first purpose built skate park, and includes skateboard and BMX facilities.

## POLICY CS14 LEISURE DEVELOPMENT

The Council will work with partner organisations to ensure the provision of a wide and accessible choice of leisure facilities for the community and which reinforce Middlesbrough's role at the heart of the Tees Valley city region. This will be achieved by:

- a the promotion of the town centre as a sub-regional leisure destination both in the day time and evening;
  - b promotion of the Green Blue Heart, Middlehaven and Prissick Base as locations for major sport and/or leisure development; and
  - c the promotion of an appropriate scale of leisure development within district centres.
- Outside of these locations a sequential approach will be applied to selection of sites and consideration of proposals.

### CASINOS

8.13 A casino, in its own right, is a major attractor of other uses, in particular hotel, leisure, and commercial. This in turn creates a major destination for people to visit, acting as a significant contributor to the economy through increased visitor spending and job creation. The regeneration benefits associated with a casino are therefore considerable, and can reach wider than the immediate vicinity. In its statement of national policy on casinos the Government recognises the role that they can have on the regeneration of deprived areas. When assessing suitable locations for a casino an advisory panel will be asked to choose areas in need of economic development and regeneration (as measured by employment and other social deprivation factors) and likely to benefit in regeneration terms from a casino. The Tees Valley has some of the most deprived wards within the country, and the most deprived of these are located at the centre of the conurbation. Middlesbrough, at the heart of the Tees Valley city region, is ideally located to accommodate a casino that would benefit the city region and its hinterland. As such it is well placed to deliver the Government's aspirations and objectives for the new regional casinos.

8.14 Casinos by their nature, will need to be located where they can have good accessibility and maximises their regeneration and economic benefits. Within Middlesbrough appropriate locations are either within the town centre or the Greater Middlehaven area. Both are well located for easy access from the A19 and A66 roads, and close to Middlesbrough railway station. Middlehaven provides the opportunity to integrate a casino and associated uses into the development of the site from the outset. This enables a scheme of appropriate proportions of an iconic quality to be created without being fettered by existing surrounding land uses. The resulting benchmark development will act as a catalyst to regenerate the wider area. Middlehaven also provides a better opportunity to locate associated uses next to or near the casino. If Middlehaven is chosen as the most appropriate location for a casino it is important to ensure that good quality links are created with the town centre.

8.15 The town centre, whilst a sustainable location, is constrained offering more limited opportunities for a casino of an appropriate scale or size. Further, the possibility of locating associated uses nearby could be restricted. If a suitable site can be found within the town centre, associated uses could be provided in accessible locations elsewhere within the centre or in Greater Middlehaven, provided that links are improved.



## POLICY CS15 CASINOS

The Council will work with partner organisations to attract and develop a regional or large casino and associated uses within Middlesbrough to reinforce the role of the town within the Tees Valley city region, and to facilitate wider regeneration activities. Suitable locations for such a development are within Greater Middlehaven and the town centre. Proposals will need to:

- a be of an iconic quality to create a landmark development appropriate to the heart of a prosperous Tees Valley city region;
- b be fully integrated with surrounding land uses;
- c provide good quality linkages between Greater Middlehaven and the town centre; and
- d demonstrate the wider regeneration benefits of the scheme.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

8.16 The following options were considered but rejected:

#### Provide no locations for town centre expansion

This option was discounted because of the current constrained nature of the town centre boundary and the need to provide opportunities for future development. This option was not supported by the SA/SEA of the Issues and Options Report.

#### Consider Cargo Fleet as a location for town centre expansion

This option was discounted as Cargo Fleet is considered to be a peripheral location for town centre expansion and not well related to current retail and commercial areas. It should be identified as an out of centre location as part of any sequential assessment.



Middlesbrough town centre

## 9 A REGIONAL CENTRE FOR EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CULTURE

### INTRODUCTION

- 9.1 Middlesbrough has the opportunity, with neighbouring Stockton, to develop as one of the north's most significant cultural and education centres. This can only be achieved by building upon and continuing improvements in the education, health and cultural aspects of the area. Good community facilities are essential to maintain and improve the quality of life of the people living and working in Middlesbrough. The Council's vision, 'Raising Hope', is built upon a foundation of education and care of children and young people and support for vulnerable people in Middlesbrough. These are also central themes of the Community Strategy.
- 9.2 Cultural activities are also important to the well-being of a town and its residents. Culture is an inclusive concept that embraces a wide variety of activities, places, values and beliefs, which in general terms is about the way and quality of life. A comprehensive cultural offer can lead to the creation of new jobs, higher retail expenditure and an increase in the number of visitors to an area. It also presents a diverse and vibrant sense of place, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it.

### EDUCATION STRATEGY

- 9.3 Building Schools for the Future is a 15 year government programme designed to renew and refurbish the country's secondary schools. This programme of renewal and refurbishment is likely to include a rationalisation of some school sites within the borough with most of the building and refurbishment activity planned to run from 2008-2011.
- 9.4 The issues facing the Council include declining pupil numbers and a lack of flexible educational accommodation. The Building Schools for the Future initiative is an opportunity to provide refurbished or modern purpose-built facilities with the right number of places, supported by the right staffing structures to deliver the national curriculum, extended schools, personalised learning and the 14-19 agenda.

- 9.5 Currently under consideration are:
- amalgamating Acklam Hall and Hall Garth schools, and building a new purpose built school either on the same or alternative site;
  - providing a single Roman Catholic secondary school for the town; and
  - proposals to increase the level of Special Education Needs (SEN)/mainstream collaboration to increase inclusion through co-location of facilities on the same site.
- 9.6 The decisions on where the investments are to be made and where any new schools might be located, or which schools are going to be surplus to requirements, are yet to be made. However, it is necessary that the Core Strategy reflects this important national initiative, which will provide major benefits for the town.



mima - the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.7 The following options were considered but rejected:

#### Not to include a policy

This would not reflect the strategic importance of education and the Building Schools for the Future programme and the contribution that it has made in achieving both the aspirations of the Community Strategy and the Mayor's 'Reduction Agenda'. Without a policy framework to deliver this programme it could create problems in the future when more detailed proposals have been drawn up for implementation.



## POLICY CS16 EDUCATION STRATEGY

The Council will ensure that in accordance with the spatial strategy of this plan, and the Education Vision of the Council, everyone now and in the future has access to the facilities required to meet their educational needs. This will be achieved by having regard to the provisions of the:

- School Organisation Plan;
  - School Asset Management Plan; and
  - Building Schools for the Future Education Vision.
- a When considering the provision of new facilities, either extensions to existing schools or new schools, regard will be had to the following criteria:
- i the contribution the facility makes to the regeneration of an area;
  - ii the size of the school, new schools will be expected to meet the minimum size requirements for the type of facility proposed;
  - iii where an existing school is overcrowded, the proposal will either eliminate the overcrowding or reduce it to acceptable levels;
  - iv the design and use of materials is such that maintenance and running costs are minimised and a high quality learning environment is created that maximises the ability to meet current and future education requirements; and
- v facilities are accessible to the catchment that they are designed to serve.
- b When considering the future of those facilities identified as surplus to requirements, regard will be had to the following criteria when assessing alternative uses:
- i closure of the facility is in accordance with a rationalisation programme that will result in a more efficient distribution of places and resources in order to deliver the Education Vision and ensure a high quality level of education provision;
  - ii alternative uses will be considered having regard to their contribution in ensuring the viable and effective delivery of the rationalisation programme;
  - iii where necessary, any residential development will need to be phased to ensure that the requirements of the RSS are met; and
  - iv proposals for retail development will need to be in accordance with the retail strategy identified in this Core Strategy.

### Include a more detailed policy

Such an approach could reduce the flexibility of bringing forward an acceptable solution and potentially act as a barrier to the successful facilitation of the Building Schools for the Future programme and any further rationalisation of education provision. It is felt that there are sufficient safeguards in place to protect amenity and other concerns

from an inappropriate school development. It is not the role of the Core Strategy to contain more specific policies. If needed these should be included in another more appropriate DPD.